

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend claims 1, 2, 3, 7, 11, 16-19, 21, and 23 as follows:

#### **Listing of Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:

a first hollow conduit;

a second conduit slidably received in the first hollow conduit;

a clamp assembly to prevent the second conduit from further sliding into the first conduit, the clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit and engaging outer surfaces of the first and second conduits;

a ring slidably ~~received around~~ mounted on the outer surface of the second conduit, wherein the clamp assembly is between the ring and the first conduit; and

at least one handle having a first end portion connected to the ring and an opposite second end portion connected to the first hollow conduit, with the clamp assembly between the ring and the second end portion of the handle.

2. (Currently Amended) A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:

a first hollow conduit having a first end;

a second conduit slidably received in the first end of the first hollow conduit;

a clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit, wherein the clamp assembly comprises:

a housing positioned adjacent to ~~one~~ the first end of the first conduit;  
and

a wedge positioned ~~on~~ between the housing and an external surface of the second conduit, with the inner surface of the wedge in facing relationship to the external surface of the second conduit and configured to engage the outer surface of the wedge in facing relationship with the inner surface of the housing, the clamp

assembly preventing to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit;

a ring slidably received around the second conduit and spaced from the clamp assembly; and

at least one handle connected to the ring and the first hollow conduit, with the clamp assembly between the ring and the connection of the at least one handle and the first hollow conduit.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The prop as claimed in claim 2, wherein:~~A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:

a first hollow conduit;

a second conduit slidably received in the first hollow conduit;

a clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit, wherein the clamp assembly comprises:

~~the clamp assembly further includes~~ a bolt and a nut,

~~the a housing is having~~ a generally C-shape[d] with opposed ends, the housing positioned adjacent one end of the first conduit,

parallel legs extend from the opposed ends,

each parallel leg ~~includes~~ comprises a bolt opening configured to receive the bolt therethrough, and

the nut ~~is received~~ on the bolt;

a wedge positioned on an external surface of the second conduit and configured to engage the housing to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit;

a ring slidably received around the second conduit; and

at least one handle connected to the ring and the first hollow conduit.

4. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 3, wherein the nut is torqued to a calibrated load.

5. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, further including a jack interface connected to the first hollow conduit and/or the second conduit.

6. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 5, wherein the jack interface is a ring configured to interact with a jack assembly.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:~~ The prop as claimed in claim 1, wherein the clamp assembly is spaced from the ring and further comprising:

~~a first hollow conduit;~~  
~~a second conduit slidably received in the first hollow conduit;~~  
~~a clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit;~~  
~~a ring slidably received around the second conduit;~~  
a flexible ring tie removably engaging the outer surface of the second conduit and positioned in the space between the ring and the clamp assembly; and  
~~at least one handle connected to the ring and the first hollow conduit.~~

8. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, further including a bearing plate positioned at a first end of the yieldable prop and/or a second end of the yieldable prop.

9. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 8, wherein the bearing plate is selected from a shape including planar, volcano, C-shaped, and I-shaped.

10. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first conduit has a first length, the second conduit has a second length, and the first and second lengths are chosen as a function of seam height and desired overlap of the first and second conduits.

11. (Currently Amended) The prop as claimed in claim 1, wherein the clamp assembly comprises at least one compressible member engaging the outer surface of the second conduit and the handle prevents the ring from sliding toward and away from the first conduit.

12. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a visual tension indicator.

13. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 12, wherein the visual tension indicator is a chain connected to the first hollow conduit.

14. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a jack assembly positioned adjacent to the first conduit and the second conduit, the jack assembly comprising:

- a jack body having a first jack end and a second jack end and defining a fluid inlet opening;

- a piston having a plunger and a piston arm, the plunger connected to one end of the piston arm and the plunger housed in the jack body;

- a jack clamp assembly positioned at the second jack end of the jack body;

- a base defining a first partial orifice positioned at the other end of the piston arm, opposite the plunger; and

- a guide defining a second partial orifice positioned adjacent to the first jack end of the jack body.

15. (Original) The prop as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a jack assembly including:

- a stock base;

- a dowel connected to the stock base;

- a manual ratchet jack attached to the dowel; and

- a stock head connected to the manual ratchet jack.

16. (Currently Amended) The prop as claimed in claim 2, wherein first end portion of the handle is ~~connected~~ secured to the ring and opposite second end portion of the handle is ~~connected to~~ secured to the outer surface of the first conduit with the clamp assembly between and spaced from the first and second end portions of the handle.

17. (Currently Amended)) The prop as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

the ~~one~~ first end of the first hollow conduit is between the first and second ends of the prop;

the housing of the clamp assembly comprises a third conduit having a first end and a second end with a passageway extending through the third conduit, a first portion of the passageway adjacent the first end of the third conduit having a constant diameter for a predetermined distance, the diameter of the first portion of the passageway is greater than outside diameter of the second conduit and smaller than outside diameter of the first conduit, and a second portion of the passageway adjacent the second end of the third conduit having a decreasing diameter as the distance from the second end of third conduit increases with the smallest diameter of the second portion of the passageway greater than outside diameter of the second conduit and smaller than outside diameter of the first conduit, the third conduit mounted on the second conduit with the first portion of the passageway adjacent to the one end of the first conduit and the second portion of the passageway of the third conduit facing the second end of the prop; and

the wedge has a first end and an opposite second end with outside diameter of the wedge increasing as the distance from the first end toward the second end of the wedge increases, the first end of the wedge slidably received in the second portion of the passageway of the third conduit, wherein as the wedge moves into the third conduit the wedge engages the external surface of the second conduit and the outer surface of the wedge engages the second portion of the passageway to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The prop as claimed in claim 17~~ A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:

a first hollow conduit;

a second conduit slidably received in the first hollow conduit;

a clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit, wherein the clamp assembly comprises:

a housing positioned adjacent to end of the first conduit between the first and second ends of the prop, the housing comprises a third conduit having a first end and a second end with a passageway extending through the third conduit, a first portion of the

passageway adjacent the first end of the third conduit having a constant diameter for a predetermined distance, the diameter of the first portion of the passageway is greater than outside diameter of the second conduit and smaller than outside diameter of the first conduit, and a second portion of the passageway adjacent the second end of the third conduit having a decreasing diameter as the distance from the second end of third conduit increases with the smallest diameter of the second portion of the passageway greater than outside diameter of the second conduit and smaller than outside diameter of the first conduit, the third conduit mounted on the second conduit with the first portion of the passageway adjacent to the one end of the first conduit and the second portion of the passageway of the third conduit facing the second end of the prop; and

a wedge positioned on an external surface of the second conduit and configured to engage the housing to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit, the wedge has a first end and an opposite second end with outside diameter of the wedge increasing as the distance from the first end toward the second end of the wedge increases, the first end of the wedge slidably received in the second portion of the passageway of the third conduit, wherein as the wedge moves into the third conduit the wedge engages the external surface of the second conduit and the outer surface of the wedge engages the second portion of the passageway to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit;

a ring slidably received around the second conduit; and

at least one handle connected to the ring and the first hollow conduit, wherein first end portion of the handle is connected to the ring and opposite second end portion of the handle is connected to the first conduit with the clamp assembly between the first and second end portions of the handle, and further comprising a ring tie removably positioned between the ring and the wedge of the clamp assembly.

19. (Currently Amended) The prop as claimed in claim 2, wherein the housing has a first end portion and an opposite second end portion with the first end portion mounting external surface of the first conduit and the second end portion of the housing extending over and spaced from the external surface of the second conduit with the inner surface of the wedge positioned between in surface engagement with the external surface of

the second conduit and the outer surface of the wedge in surface engagement with the inner surface of the second end portion of the housing and the external surface of the second conduit.

20. (Previously Presented) The prop as claimed in claim 19, wherein the wedge comprises two arcuate wedge members.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~The prop as claimed in claim 20~~ A yieldable prop having a first end and a second end comprising:

a first hollow conduit having a first end;

a second conduit slidably received in the first hollow conduit;

a clamp assembly positioned adjacent to the first hollow conduit and the second conduit, wherein the clamp assembly comprises:

a housing positioned adjacent to one end of the first conduit, wherein the housing has a first end portion and an opposite second end portion with the first end portion mounting external surface of the first conduit and the second end portion of the housing extending over and spaced from the external surface of the second conduit with the wedge positioned between the second end of the housing and the external surface of the second conduit;

a wedge positioned on an external surface of the second conduit and configured to engage the housing to prevent the second conduit from further entering the first conduit, wherein the wedge comprises two arcuate wedge assemblies;

a ring slidably received around the second conduit and spaced from the clamp assembly; and

at least one handle connected to the ring and the first hollow conduit, wherein first end portion of the handle is connected-secured to the ring and opposite second end portion of the handle is connected-secured to the first conduit with the clamp assembly between the first and second end portions of the handle, and further comprising a ring tie removably positioned between the ring and the wedge of the clamp assembly.

22. (Previously Presented) The prop as claimed in claim 21, wherein the clamp assembly further comprises a bolt and a nut and the housing comprises a generally C-shaped member having opposed ends with a leg extending from each end, the legs have a surface in facing relationship to one another and parallel to one another, each of the legs has a hole with the bolt through the hole of each leg and secured therein by the nut.

23. (Currently Amended) The prop as claimed in claim 1, wherein the clamp assembly is in spaced relationship to the ring and comprises a housing having a first end portion in surface engagement with the first conduit and an opposite second end portion having inner surface spaced from external surface of the second conduit engages a portion of the first conduit and a wedge having inner surface in surface engagement with the external surface of the second conduit and outer surface in surface engagement with inner surface of the second end portion of the housing, wherein the clamp assembly applies a compressive force on a portion of external surface of the second conduit to limit the movement of the second conduit into the first conduit, and ~~outer wall portion of the second conduit in the first conduit is in facing relationship to inner wall portion of the first conduit~~ further comprising a removable ring tie engaging the outer surface of the second conduit and between the ring and the clamp assembly.